



Abilene High School "A" Association Devotion, May 3, 2015

Well, Howdy, AHS Eagle friends...

Again we meet...at a little slower pace this year than last year. Why is it that our bodies don't keep up with our desires and "want tos" as we age? I think I was told once...but I forgot what it was!

This is the 4th year that we have had this Sunday morning devotion time at the Galbraiths.

Let's hear a cheer for the Galbraiths. Their hospitality is the greatest!

We sincerely are grateful for you in opening up your home and retreat center to us each year.

Last year was something...wasn't it?

Remember, just as I was giving my main point of my devotion and talking about the devil causing all kind of things around the world to hurt American citizens, a snake crawled out of those flower beds over there...and scooted right under the feet of the back row. I did not know what was happening...but, when someone hollered "snake", I made tracks opposite the back row.

Did not know what kind of snake it was? To me...all snakes are deadly. They will make you do things that can hurt yourself...bad!

One thing I know and I observe as I come here each year...We are getting older by the minute. Literally...

I used to laugh under my breath when Sherry shaved her dad. He would stretch his skin with his tongue and finger to tighten those sunken, wrinkled places on and around his mouth.

Now, I am there. Dimples, warts, bruises...and crevices. Don't laugh, guys, you are there, too.

We have finally reached the "Wonder Years."

Wonder where my car is parked? Wonder where my keys are? Wonder where I left my phone? Wonder where my sunglasses are? Oh, I have them on! By the way, what day is it?

We have come from just getting older to "we are just Old!

We all are at the age where almost everything hurts and what doesn't hurt doesn't work anymore...We just can't do what we use to do...but, we think we can.

**A friend sent me a cute article that I can identify with. I'll bet you can to!
This could soooooo be me...and probably most of us!!!!!!**

My wife is into journaling...kind of like keeping a diary.
Like this lady who is serious about writing in her diary.

Dear Diary,

For my birthday this year, my daughter purchased a week of personal training at the local health club.

Although I am still in great shape since being a high school football cheerleader 40 some odd years ago, I decided it would be a good idea to go ahead and give it a try.

I called the club and made my reservations with a personal trainer named Christo, who identified himself as a 26-year-old aerobics instructor and model for athletic clothing and swim wear.

Friends and especially my children.. seemed pleased with my enthusiasm to get started!
The club encouraged me to keep a diary to chart my progress.

MONDAY:

Started my day at 6:00 a.m. Tough to get out of bed, but found it was well worth it when I arrived at the health club to find Christo waiting for me. He is something of a Greek god-- with blond hair, dancing eyes, and a dazzling white smile. Woo Hoo!!

Christo gave me a tour and showed me the machines. I enjoyed watching the skillful way in which he conducted his aerobics class after my workout today. Very inspiring!

Christo was encouraging as I did my sit-ups, although my gut was already aching from holding it in the whole time he was around. This is going to be a FANTASTIC week!! _____

TUESDAY:

I drank a whole pot of coffee, but I finally made it out the door. Christo made me lie on my back and push a heavy iron bar into the air then he put weights on it! My legs were a little wobbly on the treadmill, but I made the full mile. His rewarding smile made it all worthwhile. I feel GREAT! It's a whole new life for me. _____

WEDNESDAY:

The only way I can brush my teeth is by laying the toothbrush on the counter and moving my mouth back and forth over it. I believe I have a hernia in both pectorals. Driving was OK as long as I didn't try to steer or stop. I parked on top of a small car in the club parking lot.

Christo was impatient with me, insisting that my screams bothered other club members. His voice is a little too perky for that early in the morning and when he scolds, he gets this nasally whine that is VERY annoying.

My chest hurt when I got on the treadmill, so Christo put me on the stair monster. Why would anyone invent a machine to simulate an activity rendered obsolete by elevators? Christo told me it would help me get in shape and enjoy life. He said some other "cock-a-mayme" stuff too.

THURSDAY:

"Mr. Hunk of Meat" was waiting for me with his vampire-like teeth exposed as his thin, cruel lips were pulled back in a full snarl. I couldn't help being a half an hour late—it took me that long to tie my shoes.

He took me to work out with dumbbells. When he was not looking, I ran and hid in the restroom. He sent some skinny witch to find me.

Then, as punishment, he put me on the rowing machine-- which I sank.

FRIDAY:

I hate that piece of stink Christo more than any human being has ever hated any other human being in the history of the world. Stupid, skinny, anemic, anorexic, little aerobics instructor. If there was a part of my body I could move without unbearable pain, I would beat him with it.

Christo wanted me to work on my triceps. I don't have any triceps! And if you don't want dents in the floor, don't hand me the darn barbells or anything that weighs more than a sandwich.

The treadmill flung me off and I landed on a health and nutrition teacher. Why couldn't it have been someone softer, like the drama coach or the choir director? _____

SATURDAY:

Satan himself left a message on my answering machine in his grating, shrilly voice wondering why I did not show up today. Just hearing his voice made me want to smash the machine with my planner; however, I lacked the strength to even use the TV remote and ended up catching eleven straight hours of the Weather Channel.. _____

SUNDAY:

I'm having the Church van pick me up for services today so I can go and thank GOD that this week is over. I will also pray that next year my daughter will choose a gift for me that is fun-- like a root canal or a hysterectomy. I still say if God had wanted me to bend over, he would have sprinkled the floor with diamonds!!!

Signed: Bambi, the Princess of the Lions Club Parade, Sweetwater, Texas, 1965

This is the 4th year you have heard me give the devotion for our "A" Association meeting.

The 1st devotion (2012) centered in on the qualities of being "Eagles."

I used the acronym "EAGLES."

E = Excellence....Spirit of excellence

A = Accountability (accountable)...to yourself, to others, to God.

G = Gracious/Grateful...thankful...parents, teachers, coaches, American

L = Loyal...loyalty... Loyal to teammates..

E = Earnest....Determined...sincere

S = Sacrificial...sacrificing...body to make sure the team wins...I compared the sacrifice of our bodies to help our team win and, hopefully made it clear that the greatest sacrifice ever made was Jesus' death on the cross for someone else's sins...mine and yours.

2nd Year, 2013, I used the letter A...for "A" Association and stated what I feel it means to be a member of the "A" Association and what character traits our coaches (and some teachers) expected from those who lettered in the sports at Abilene High:

A = Appreciative; Acknowledge that we can't make it by ourselves.

A = Affirm (Encourage others)

A = Admirable Attitude

A = American

A = Accountable to our teammates and coaches, our parents and family, and to God.

Last year (2014) I used the letter “M” to make my mark count before we left for our homes. Remember the “M and Ms” I brought to hand out.

M = Mend Broken Relationships

M = Minimize Regrets

M = Meditate on Worthwhile Memories

M = Maximize Your Faith

Today, I want to encourage all of us to make the most of what years we have left on planet earth...

The Bible calls it “stretching or pressing toward the mark of the high-calling of God.”

Philippians 3:14, [New International Version](#)

I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

[New Living Translation](#)

I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.

[King James Bible](#)

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

(Show Carlton Stowers stretching for the string).

Also, Paul, in his last days, talked about him “running the race and finishing the course.”

[2 Timothy 4:7](#)

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

The apostle Paul knew his days were numbered...but, he was still holding on to His faith and knew exactly where he was going.

“I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities...or things present, nor things to come...will be able to separate me from the love of God through Christ Jesus.” Romans 8:38-39.

So...Here are my suggestions as we stretch toward the mark on our way home: I think you can use these suggestions on your children and grandchildren. They might not heed to these suggestions as much as you will...because they just can't see what is around the corner.

- **Learn to Listen...and, Listen to Learn.**

One of the things I have learned is that if my mouth is working, my brain seldom makes any progress. It centers in on the "right now." But listening...whether it is someone who is very wise or not so wise, you can learn from their experiences and their attitudes.

Don't fail to listen to your heart. Listening with your ears and not applying wisdom with what you have heard will only bring misery.

Wayne Gretsky, the great hockey star, in an interview with a Sportscaster:

Sportscaster: What one suggestion to young hockey players would you have for them?

Gretsky said, "Always observe where the puck is headed, not where it has been."

Note: If I see where someone is headed and I don't want to go there, I change courses. As you get older, you know who and what to listen to. We need to listen, learn, and lead others (especially the young, those you love) to follow their hearts, not their head.

- **Laugh a Lot**

The most depressing people I know are older, senior people, retired people who are angry at life and who don't know how refreshing it is to laugh.

We have some in our congregation, some in organizations that we belong to, who have not grinned and burst out laughing for years.

Learn to laugh at jokes, at yourself, at life.

Most of us are pros at going to the doctor. Remember when our parents didn't have hospital insurance. We hurt ourselves, mom put me thiolate, alcohol, or campho phinique on it and we were cured.

I go to the doctor now for a scratch on my upper thigh and they want to Xray it...and they always want to do blood work. Can't win with requirements like that!

The assistant at the doctor's office wants us to put on this stupid backward gown on that closes in the back. Why?

I have figured it out.

Those things the doctors check our ears and throat with...you know the little light, looks like a small flash light. They set the thing on the ledge and it is always pointing out. This is where they can observe us on a computer or television screen trying to get in this backward gown. This gown has three (3) straps in the back to tie...to cover your backside.

In the meantime, all in the doctor's office (nurses and doctors) are watching you try to tie that darned gown on backward...and laughing like crazy.

Now, if you can tie all three (3) you get to keep your doctor; If you only can tie two, you get to keep your insurance; and if you can only tie one, you get to at least get your own insurance. However, if you can't tie or don't want to tie at least one...Sarah Palin talked about it...death panels.

Laugh a lot...it will do you good...and keep you enjoying what time you have left.

- But listen to your doctor and ask questions if you don't understand....
My doctor told me to run five miles per day for two weeks... "I called him up and said, "Hey, doc, I'm seventy miles from home. What next?"
- Husband on Medication for the Rest of His Life....
Wife: "How did it go at the doctor's office this afternoon, honey?
Husband: "The doctor said that I would have to take this medication every day for the rest of my life!
Wife: "What's so terrible about that?"
Husband: "He only gave me 4 pills!!"

- **Leave a Legacy of Faith..**

Legacy = Something handed down from an ancestor or a predecessor or from the past.

Faith = Secure belief in God and a trusting acceptance of God's will viewed as a theological virtue. Confident or unquestioning belief in the truth, value, or trustworthiness of a person, idea, or thing.

What are you leaving for your family? Your children? Your friends? Those you love the most?

We know you can't take things with you when you leave this world.

1 Timothy 6:7, "For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it."

Things (inheritance \$\$; a home; your savings)...MEMORIES... (GOOD OR BAD).

THE BEST LEGACY YOU CAN LEAVE IS A LEGACY OF FAITH. IT WON'T PERISH; IT WON'T CHANGE; IT WON'T DETERIORATE WITH TIME.

Your family...they need to know that there was a good relationship between you and God; and, how you lived life with a consistent, confident and unwavering faith in a God who gives eternal life through Jesus His Son.

That is leaving a Legacy of Faith!

• Live Life Loving the Lord...

I have been to many funerals. I have spoken at many funerals....even sung at a funeral...and, I don't like to go to funerals, but I go because I want to show respect for the family of those that pass.

I have seen some weird funerals. I have left some funerals crying because of such a lousy life lived by those that pass...and/or those that have been left on planet earth.

Some of these funerals I absolutely would love to have taped and the video sent out to my family, friends, and the church family. The most inspiring, the most uplifting, the most precious are those that have lived their life loving the Lord.

The ones that are the most uplifting are the ones where the person being eulogized had a drastic change in their life after they realize that they can't make it in life on their own. They give up and turn their life completely over to the Lord. I rejoice with the family and I rejoice with the Lord.

One of these days, not long from now, we will be eulogized. It can be a time of sadness or a time of rejoicing for the family. I know where I am going after this life. My faith tells me that. But, even if I really didn't believe in the afterlife, I would fake it for the family. The family is left on this earth. You might not care about the afterlife because you are gone. But...for the sake of those left here...Live like you love the Lord and make sure your actions do not reflect differently.

The most selfish, pitiful, ungodly action a person can do is to leave this life with a chip on the shoulder and having the family to leave the cemetery crying and not knowing where their loved one has made their final resting place.

Clint Eastwood: In the movie the Outlaw, Josie Wales, Clint had a one liner that was priceless... "dying ain't much of a living, boy!"

Well, it ain't much of a living...but, it doesn't have to be a negative thing when we believe and want others to believe that there is an afterlife and it is much better than what we have here.

Many of us have had serious illnesses, diseases, or even some near death experiences.

I don't know why we were left here on planet earth, other than the fact that God had some more work for us to do.

One of my favorite male singers, Don Williams, had a major hit called "Living on Tulsa Time."

Those of us who have been told, you have cancer or some other disease, "We are not living on Tulsa Time. We are "living on borrowed time."

Be a good steward of your time. Stretch toward the mark without looking back.

I will close with this. One more double L:

Live Life to the Last Second...and then step into eternity with joy:

Other tips for those stretching toward home:

1. Help someone along the way.
2. Give without expecting something in return.
3. Appreciate every day you have.
4. Make the most of what time you have on earth.
5. Be a blessing, not a curse.
6. Forgive and forget those who have wronged you.

My favorite female singer is Alison Krauss. All of the concerts I have heard on television or in person, she closes with a spiritual song. She is not a show. She is an entertainer who uses her talents in a most humble manner.

Our prayer is this: *A Living Prayer...Alison Krauss*



*In this world I walk alone...With no place to call my home
But there's one who holds my hand...The rugged road through barren lands
The way is dark the road is steep...But He's become my eyes to see
The strength to climb my griefs to bear...The Savior lives inside me there*

*In Your love I find release...A haven from my unbelief
Take my life and let me be...A living prayer my God to Thee*

*In these trials of life I find...Another voice inside my mind
He comforts me and bids me live...Inside the love the Father gives.*

*In Your love I find release...A haven from my unbelief
Take my life and let me be...A living prayer my God to Thee.*

Devotion given by: Gerald Cumby, AHS graduate, 1959